CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please cancel claim 3 and amend claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 13 and 14, wherein underlining indicates additions and strikethrough and double brackets indicate deletions, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A weighting system for a pool cue having a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle portion having a terminal end, the weighting system comprising:

a first internal cavity proximate the terminal end;

a second internal cavity proximate the terminal end including a circumferential wall, the second internal cavity being larger than the first internal cavity, the first and second internal cavities substantially coaxial with each other;

an end cap for insertion into the second internal cavity in an assembled configuration such that flexible external ribs of the end cap engage the circumferential wall and a head of the end cap forms a smooth continuous surface with an external side surface of the handle portion; and

a plurality of weights removably installed within the first internal cavity, wherein the weights are capable of being individually removed to incrementally reduce the total weight of the pool cue to a desired level, the end cap securing the plurality of weights in the first internal cavity in the assembled configuration.

2. (Currently Amended) A weighting system for a pool cue having a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle portion having a terminal end, the weighting system comprising:

a first internal cavity in the handle portion proximate the terminal end and having an internally threaded wall;

a second internal cavity in the handle portion that is axially aligned with the first internal cavity and is located between the terminal end and the first internal cavity, the second internal cavity being larger than the first internal cavity;

a plurality of externally threaded rods, each rod having:

a predetermined diameter;

a first end and a second end; and

a tool fitting formed within at least the first end,

wherein the threaded rods are adapted for threaded engagement with the internally threaded wall and wherein the first internal cavity is of sufficient length to accommodate installation of multiple threaded rods therein; and

an end cap plug including a plug shaft and a plug head, the plug head being completely received within the second internal cavity in an assembled configuration.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The weighting system for a pool cue of claim 2, wherein the weight of the threaded rods is between about one-half of an ounce and about one ounce.

5. (Original) The weighting system for a pool cue of claim 2, wherein each threaded rod is about three-eighths of an inch in diameter.

6. (Original) The weighting system for a pool cue of claim 2, wherein each threaded rod is between about one inch and about two inches in length.

7. (Original) The weighting system for a pool cue of claim 2, wherein the length of the internally threaded wall of the first internal cavity is about six inches.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A weighting system for a pool cue having a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle portion having a terminal end, the weighting system comprising:

an internal cavity in the handle portion proximate the terminal end, the cavity having a total length, a closed end and an open end;

a plurality of rods, each of the rods having a length,

a first plug, ~~at least a portion of~~ the entire plug being adapted to be releasably received in the internal cavity, the first plug including an extraction member having a length, the length being sufficient to extend beyond the terminal end;

wherein:

the rods are slidingly received within the cavity;

the rods are held in place within the cavity by the plug; and

the first internal cavity is of sufficient length to accommodate installation of multiple rods therein; and

a plurality of additional plugs of different lengths, each of the first plug and the additional plugs corresponding to a particular combination of rods such that the sum of the

length of the portion of a second end of each plug received in the internal cavity and the length of the particular corresponding rod combination matches the total length of the cavity.

10. (Currently Amended) A weighting system for a pool cue having a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle portion having a terminal end, the weighting system comprising:

an internal cavity in the handle portion proximate the terminal end, the cavity having a total length, a closed end and an open end;

a plurality of rods, each of the rods having a length,

a plug, at least a portion of the plug being adapted to be releasably received in the internal cavity, the plug includes a compressible portion proximate a first end and a head portion proximate a second end, the compressible portion being encased within a sleeve, the head end of the plug removably mountable in a bore at the terminal end of the handle portion;

wherein:

the rods are slidingly received within the cavity;

the rods are held in place within the cavity by the plug; and

the first internal cavity is of sufficient length to accommodate installation of multiple rods therein.

11. (Previously Presented) The weighting system for a pool cue of claim 9, wherein:

a portion of a wall of the cavity proximate the open end is provided with an internal thread;

at least a portion of a head portion is provided with an external thread; and

the head portion is releaseably received in the cavity by threaded engagement.

12. (Previously Presented) A method of tailoring weight characteristics of a pool cue having an end cap with a head and a shaft to preferences of an individual user, comprising the steps of:

providing the pool cue having a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle portion having a terminal end, a first internal cavity proximate the terminal end and a second internal cavity proximate the terminal end;

providing a plurality of weights removably installable within the internal cavity;

inserting the plurality of weights into the first internal cavity;

removably inserting at least a portion of the end cap into the second cavity until the head is in contact with the terminal end to secure the plurality of weights in the first internal cavity, and

removing the end cap such that the plurality of weights may be individually removed from the first internal cavity to incrementally reduce the total weight of the pool cue to a desired level.

13. (Currently Amended) A method of tailoring weight and balance characteristics of a pool cue to preferences of an individual user, comprising the steps of:

providing a pool cue including a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle having a terminal end and [[an]]a first internal cavity in the handle portion proximate the terminal end, the handle portion further including a second internal cavity between the first internal cavity and the terminal end, the second internal cavity being larger than the first internal cavity, the first internal cavity having an internally threaded wall;

providing a plurality of externally threaded rods, each rod having the same predetermined diameter, a first end, a second end and a tool fitting formed within at least the first end;

installing a sufficient number of the plurality of externally threaded rods within the internal cavity to provide the pool cue with the weight characteristics in accordance with the user's preferences; ~~and~~

positioning the sufficient number of threaded rods within the internal cavity to provide the pool cue with the balance characteristics in accordance with the user's preferences; and

installing an end cap plug into the first and second internal cavities, the end cap plug including a plug shaft and a plug head, the plug head being completely received within the second internal cavity.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of tailoring weight characteristics of a pool cue to preferences of an individual user, comprising the steps of:

providing a pool cue including:

a handle portion and a shaft portion, the handle having a terminal end;

an internal cavity in the handle portion proximate the terminal end, the internal cavity having a closed end and an open end, the internal cavity having a cavity length;

a first plug releasably receivable in the open end of the internal cavity, the first plug including an extraction member having a length, the first plug having a first length; and

a second plug being receivable in the open end of the internal cavity, the second plug having a second length that is different than the first length;

providing a plurality of weight rods;

removing the first plug from the open end of the internal cavity utilizing the extraction member;

installing a sufficient number of the plurality of weight rods within the internal cavity to provide the pool cue with the weight characteristics in accordance with the user's preferences;

replacing the first plug in the open end of the internal cavity to secure the weight rods within the internal cavity such that the sum of the first length and the length of the selected plurality of weight rods is substantially equivalent to the cavity length;

removing the first plug and the plurality of weight rods from the internal cavity;

installing a different number but sufficient of the plurality of weight rods within the internal cavity to provide the pool cue with a different weight characteristic in accordance with the user's preferences; and

inserting the second plug into the open end of the internal cavity to secure the different number of the plurality of weight rods within the internal cavity such that the sum of the second length and the length of the selected plurality of weight rods is substantially equivalent to the cavity length.